Changing Others vs Changing Self? Neville Goddard Contradiction?

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There is an apparent contradiction in Neville's work when it comes to changing other people. Mostly his earlier work towards his later work. Overall, I think it is a similar message.

Let's start off with the controversial quote:

> *"Prayers depend upon your attitude of mind for their success and not upon the attitude of the subject. The subject has no power to resist your controlled subjective ideas of him unless the state affirmed by you to be true of him is a state he is incapable of wishing as true of another. In that case it returns to you, the sender, and will realize itself in you. Provided the idea is acceptable, success depends entirely on the operator not upon the subject who, like compass needles on their pivots, are quite indifferent as to what direction you choose to give them. If your fixed idea is not subjectively accepted by the one toward whom it is directed, it rebounds to you from whom it came. "Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." "There shall no evil happen to the just." Nothing befalls us that is not of the nature of ourselves. A person who directs a malicious thought to another will be injured by its rebound if he fails to get subconscious acceptance of the other. "As ye sow, so shall ye reap." Furthermore, what you can wish and believe of another can be wished and believed of you, and you have no power to reject it if the one who desires it for you accepts it as true of you."* - ***Neville, Prayer and the Art of Believing (1945)***

So here in 1945 Neville wrote on this idea that if one were to imagine a state for another but that other cannot realize that state for themselves, it will return to you. Then he gives an example:

If you imagine maliciously towards another but that other cannot imagine maliciously towards themselves or another, then that will be returned to you. Then he quotes scripture, "*There shall no evil happen to the just."* Meaning that we receive what is aligned with our nature. So if I am just, no evil will befall me since that is not what I am conscious of being. Evil can only happen to you if you yourself are capable of said evil within you. Other than that, it cannot touch you.

Now it is to no surprise how this would be a contradiction because how does one know if the seeming other would be able to accept or if they would reject a state? If you imagine for someone and you think "It is done!" then how do you truly know? How can you truly have faith in

something if that seeming other could reject it? It will always remain up in the air. Then your own imagination only holds as much power as the seeming other allows it to.

In this case, he is also seeing it from the others perspective. So if you know yourself to be rich, that is just how you know yourself, if others around you imagine your being poor out of envy, it will not effect you for that is not aligned with your nature. So the envious imaginal acts from others will return to them. He states that here, "*Nothing befalls us that is not of the nature of ourselves."*

This also is dependent on how you see people. If you see people with free will of their own, then you will think in terms of them rejecting the state you have for them. I personally think this is where Neville's mind was going during this time. I can also see his point. But if you solely see people as figments, states in your world then to change them, logically there would be no rejection. (*We will get to this later*)

Also he is starting in a difficult fashion, "What goes around, comes around." He could have quoted his proverb, "*The wind blows to the south and goes around to the north; around and around goes the wind, and on its circuits the wind returns" **Ecclesiastes 1:6-7**.* Now this can be rejected if you want, however, if you think of this way it makes sense. If you open yourself up to malice and thinking evil upon everything around you, you have OPENED this door INSIDE of you. You are creating malice inside of yourself so do not be surprised if you start to conform to malice and your world starts to form that way.

You are becoming conscious of it, and if you continue being conscious of it, you will start to take upon the nature of what you are conscious of. Again it is not up to debate. If I imagine evil upon others, I imagine their downfall, problems for them, I am becoming conscious this and I will start to create a world that aligns with this nature. It does not just affect the other but me as well.

Since we are One, to harm another is harm yourself.

It is not up for debate, it's just the way it is. We become what we contemplate about, good, bad or indifferent. So those who hate a certain group, if they contemplate on that group long enough, they will start to take upon the nature of what they hate. They will literally become what they hate because we become what we contemplate about. If you are willing to invite it in your mind, you are also inviting that in your life for they are linked. We become what we imagine ourselves and seeming others to be.

But did Neville abandon this idea or did he adjust it?

Well, 3 years later here he states this,

> *"I thought I could change others through effort. Now I know I cannot change another unless I first change myself. To change another within my world I must first change my concept of that other; and to do it best I change my concept of self. For it was the concept I held of self that made me see others as I did." - **Neville, Five Lessons (1948)***

Here in this context he is saying that if you want to change a person, you can try to use force and effort but it won't work well. So then what to do if I want to change the concept of the seeming other? He states he must first change HIMSELF. You change your world BEST by changing your own conception, NOT trying to change the other. For the reason you see the seeming other that way, is based on the concept you hold of yourself.

Meaning, the way you behold others is based on how you are beholding yourself. That is why when I had a vision and I looked at Neville and I said and saw, “You are the Son of God.” I just knew it, then what did he reply with? “You are what you behold.” So he is telling me that I am also what he is for I am beholding that. I cannot see someone as the Son of God unless I am the Son of God as well.

Now this matters because as what was stated above, if you see people as figments, and you too are a person, then you will have to see yourself that way. ***For what you are what you behold.*** You could not see a figment unless you see yourself that way. The truth is, no one truly lives this way, so in my opinion, they don’t truly believe it. Nobody argues with figments, marries figments. If you truly saw them as figments, you would not bother with it. Remember what Neville said, *“Our real beliefs are what we live by.”* Unless you are living as though everyone around is a figment, then you do not actually believe it.

The issue as well that arises is that in order to demean a person, you would invariably have to demean yourself for we are One. This is what it means that, *“For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”* - ***Matt 7:2*** Again, this is the same thing being said, “You are what you behold.”

So if want to see others in a greater fashion, the easiest way is to start with seeing myself that way. To change the way I see them BEST, I first do it to myself. So we BECOME what we want others to BE. If I want to change myself successfully, and since I am a part of my life then it should be obvious that I must change myself, not others. However, if I want to change others, it must go through myself (*We will get into that later*).

This is aligned with consistent message of “*No one to change just self.*” (*Well will get into what SELF means)*

A great example is when Neville wanted to leave the army. He imagined himself back at home with his family doing all the normal daily activities of life in his imagination. What he did NOT do, was try to change the Colonel’s mind.

Read it carefully,

> *“They drafted me. Took me down to Camp Polk, Louisiana, for my basic training. And while I was there, I didn’t want any part of it. And I dare to assume that I am out of it and made my normal natural application, as you have to do in the world of Caesar. Within twenty-four hours, it came back and it was simply rejected. It was signed disapproved and signed by my colonel. A very nice gentleman. His name was Colonel Theodore Bilbo, Jr. His father was the senator from Mississippi. I said*

nothing. My captain said, "For your sake, Goddard, I am very, very sorry. I know exactly how you feel. You want to be with your wife and your little girl." (…) I didn't say one word to him, to the colonel. I didn't oppose it. That was the decision of Caesar. Now, I looked into the perfect law, the Law of Liberty, and I persevered in that law. And I slept that night as though I slept in my own home in New York City on Washington Square, where I lived on the 7th floor. I lived on that floor and it was a very large apartment, with two bedrooms, a lovely, big living room, a dining room, a huge kitchen, and a foyer.

And I slept in that place just as though I were there, not in the army. I fell asleep in that state, having done all the normal things that would make me feel this arrangement is perfect. I ***rearranged the structure of my mind****. Instead of seeing twenty-five men around me, sleeping upstairs and knowing that twenty- five were down below in the next area, I slept in my own bed with my wife in her bed and my little girl in her crib in the corner. I felt everything in that place just as though it's taking place. And I rearranged the structure of my mind and fell sound asleep in that state. (…) At four o'clock in the morning, here comes a sheet of paper before my eye and a hand from here down with a pen in its hand and the pen scratched out the word "disapproved" and it wrote in, in a bold script "approved." And then I heard the word: that which I have done. I have done. Do nothing. And then I woke. Nine days later, the same colonel that disapproved of my request called me in.*

He said, "Close the door, Goddard." So, I closed the door. He said, "Take a seat." He never asked me to take a seat in his presence before. I was a private. You always stood in his presence. He said, "Take a seat." And then he gave me all the reasons in the world why I should still be in the army. He said, "Do you still want to get out?" I said, "Yes, sir." He gave me another reason. "Do you still want to get out?" I said, "Yes, sir." Another one. When he exhausted all the reasons why I should be in the army—and I'm still saying, "yes, sir"—he said, "all right, bring me another application and have your captain sign it," which I did that day. I was honorably discharged and out of the army. I didn't run away. I was honorably discharged. (…)

I was convinced I wanted out and I didn't ask anyone's permission. I did not discuss it with anyone as to why I should want out when 17 million men are being drafted plus numberless girls to make a tremendous effort against this monstrous thing that was in Europe. I still wanted out. I did not take anyone into my confidence as to why I wanted out." - ***Neville, Rearrange the Mind (1972)***

So what did he change? The structure of HIS mind. He did not change anyone else around him at all. He did not plea with the Colonel. He did not feel defeated because the Colonel was set on keeping him. However, the SAME Colonel that disapproved him CHANGED! How did Neville change him? By changing HIMSELF. So the brute force way or the BEST way, to change your reality is by changing yourself. He made himself free. The world put him in the state of being a solider and he put himself in the state of being freed back at home. Now this goes back to the

idea that he must receive his nature, which was being freed regardless of circumstances. So the colonel HAS to change his mind because Neville was freed inside.

But what changed? The colonel? ***NO***. Neville did. He is receiving himself. So he is not MAKING people do anything as if they are puppets, he simply changing ***himself***. Then the people, the states will come or change to conform to HIS new image OR rearranged structure of HIS mind. Remember this is how to change reality BEST. He is not stating that you cannot change it in other ways. In the same book, Prayer and the Art of Believing, he states *"Fools exploit the world; the wise transfigure it."* So you can exploit, you can try to use force but it is foolish. It is a misunderstanding of life. Since you are intrinsically tied with YOUR life, then the best thing to change is yourself. Why try to change everyone around you but you? You are the only thing you have control over.

Now he told this story again in 1972, but this actually happened in 1942 then he got out in 1943. Then 2 years later (*1945*) he is speaking on the subconscious mind and rebounding, rejecting etc in his book, "Prayer and the Art of Believing (1945)." After this time, he never brought up the subconscious mind, rebounding, rejection again. Instead it turned from that to **FAILURE**.

In his later lectures, he speaks on changing others again, but not in the same way,

> *"Forgiving was simply putting into practice repentance and faith, for repentance and faith are the conditions of forgiveness. I repent by simply changing my attitude, reforming the being before me. You are unemployed? Well now, not in my mind's eye. You are gainfully employed. You're missing your mark in life? You haven't found your goal? Not in my mind's eye, you've found the goal. Now, to the degree that I'm* ***self-persuaded*** *you should conform, for I have a new form for you, a new state. You should come into that state if I am faithful to that state and faith is simply remaining loyal to unseen reality. The world hasn't seen it as yet, but I've seen it. So this unseen reality I am loyal to it. I will not violate this pledge: I pledge myself to remain loyal to a state relative to you or to myself. And to that degree you should conform to this state if I am loyal to it. But repentance came first, because it meant changing or reforming what I saw with my senses. In my mind's eye I changed it."* - ***The Mystery of Forgiveness, Neville (1969)***
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> *"And man invariably becomes what he beholds. I can take anyone in this world and if I represent him to myself as the man, the woman, I would like him to be and if I do not waver in that representation, he will conform to it. I want someone to be big in my world, then make him big in my mind first and treat him that way morning, noon and night, and see him as that being, and he cannot fail. I'll bring him into that picture regardless if I do not fail, because I must become what I behold. I'll bring him right into it. But we waver, we hear rumors that he did this or she did that, and then we change the picture. Don't change the picture!"* - ***Neville, The I In Me Is God Himself, (1969)***

> “First of all, you must know what you want and then assume that you have it. You must assume that to the same extent that I am assuming, that I am seeing and I am what I am beholding. For man becomes what he beholds! I must behold myself secure if that is what I want; I must behold myself healthy if that’s what I want; I must behold myself known if that’s what I want. I must see it actually as he in me is seeing the face of the Father. He never deviates from that, but he casts his shadow, allowing his shadow to apply it in this world. So everyone here is as free as the wind if you know who you really are. No matter what you’ve gone through—and you’ve gone through hell—and what you are going through and what you may go through, you must be redeemed.” - ***Neville, The I In Me Is God Himself, 1969***
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> *“Don't complain because you were born behind the 8-ball, born on the wrong side of the tracks, it doesn't really matter if you know God's law, and you're willing to trust God. God acts in you through your imaginal acts. Well then, single out what you want your friend to be, what you want yourself to be, and believe that they are. You can start doing this now with a friend in your office. If you're having any problems with him, treat it as kind...as though he were...treat him as though he were generous, treat him as though he had intelligence, treat him as you would like to see him. Do you know, he will conform to it. He may be the same rascal to others, but to you he wouldn't be. He has to conform to what you actually* ***persuade*** *yourself that he is; and in your presence and in your world he is such a person. You can take anyone in this room. You're not the same person to any two, far less any twelve. They see you differently, because they are seeing through their concepts of you. They see you through their assumption of you. No one is right. So tonight, you take yourself, start with self, and try it. See if you do not in the immediate future actually change your world to conform to these changes that take place within your mind. As I change it within, I change it without.” -* ***Neville, The Rock, The Water And The Wine (1966)***

So now years later, here Neville is suggesting that to change someone, you must become SELF-persuaded of the imaginal change. If you waiver, if you become moved by some rumor, then you are not remaining faithful to that image of them. Then we change it or revert back.

Then he states that the person will conform to your assumptions of them IF YOU ARE PERSUADED OF THE REALITY. That they may be rude to another but they will be kind to you. They will have to conform to you. This all still comes back to **YOU**.

Now what does SELF mean in this context? Self is not your little ego self. This conception of SELF is far greater. In this case, Self is the same as Imagination. So we all live in our imaginations and what we are persuaded as REALITY inside this imagination, will become our reality. So to reverse it, reality is SELF and SELF is collection of persuasions of imagination. So what creates reality is what we are persuaded reality is in this world of imagination.

No one to change but Self and Self is One with Imagination here. So Self is in this context means, ALL that we are persuaded is reality in Imagination. This is why Neville is so adamant on the idea of believing in the reality of your imaginal act. You can think of it as imagination as a vast landscape of ideas that require you to believe in them for them to take form here. This is what it means that "*God calls things are unseen as though they are seen.*"

So if I wish to change anything whether it's myself or a seeming other. I must change what I am persuaded what reality is in Imagination. Failure in being persuaded results in a failure of expression.

Instead of rejection from the other, it is failure in the self-persuasion. Failure in the faith, which he defined as loyalty to the unseen reality. So the only failure there is, is a failure in faith. This makes sense that failure is within us. Meaning if you do not see yourself as ALREADY being what you desire, then you are failing to become it. That just makes sense, does it not? FAILURE is replaced with rebounding, rejection etc.

So did Neville discard what he said? In a sense yes and a way no. He discarded the idea of rebounding, rejection. The idea of the subconscious mind. He discarded the other. But then he replaces it with the SELF. That to change another, I must change my conception of that other, through self-persuasion and being faithful to that image. So who is changing? SELF. So I am not getting frustrated with that seeming other, I am not checking on them but asking if I am remaining loyal to my image that I imagined for them? It still comes back to SELF. If I want to see others in a higher and lovelier way, how do I do I that? By seeing MYSELF in a higher and lovelier way.

So no matter what, it comes back to SELF. No one to change but self and self consists of what I am imagining.

But…then Neville states to not imagine evil for the other. As we stated, to imagine harm on another, since we are one, that would be imagining harm on yourself. Up until his death, he was consistent on the idea of framing your imaginal acts within the Golden Rule.

Here in 1969, close to his death, he is still speaking on this Golden Rule, *"Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."*

> *"You will know why you should live by this Golden Rule because you will discover that it is just good common sense to do so since the rule is based upon life's changeless law and is no respecter of persons. Consciousness is the one and only reality." "The world and all within it are states of consciousness objectified. Your world is defined by your conception of yourself PLUS YOUR CONCEPTIONS OF OTHERS which are not their conceptions of themselves." -* ***Neville***
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> *"Love. It is the answer…love is the end. If you're ever in doubt, do the loving thing and you have done the right thing. If you're ever in doubt, would I like it done to me? It's the eternal story called the Golden Rule: do unto others as you would have them do unto you. So I imagine you to be and I name it…because the same thing I*

> *imagined for you I wouldn't mind if I had it myself. To me that's the only way to give a gift. When I go to give a person a gift, I always think "Would I like it? Would I wear it? Would I like to have it and keep it?" Well, buy it as though you were buying it for yourself and then give it. I mean, to me that's giving in this world. Not to get rid of something you really don't want yourself. That's how most people give in this world. Well, I mean, would I like it? If I would like it, well, that's the one thing I want to give. So I ask myself, "Would I like it?" Then, I give it to you in the sense in my Imagination. I clothe you with what I myself would like to have…good fortune, health, this, that and the other. But I am free to choose unlovely things, and most people, unfortunately, choose unlovely things and imagine horrible things for individuals, for communities, for nations. But I cannot avoid that risk. I can't hold back the principle as I've discovered it. I can talk about the principle and try my best to explain it, but leave you who hear it to your choice and its risks." -* ***Neville, Foreknowledge (1969)***

This is where it all comes back full circle,

So many times you see people trying to change others. Hating that someone is on conforming. Usually these people are upset because they are not having full control of others. Yet, they would not want another to have full control of them.

What they wish for others, they would not want that done to them. When you imagine hatefully to others, you have opened the door for this to happen to you as well, for the door was opened within you.

It must be stated that you can completely ignore this golden rule. Not give it a minute of your time, but Neville said it was just common sense to follow it back in 1942. When you start to live upon it, you realize it is not about being a some perfect, holy person. It is just that, common sense. Would I want riches? Love? Freedom? Respect? Joy? What's wrong with that? Not a thing wrong with it. So I have no issue imagining that for someone.

But if you come to me and want someone to change in a way that is harmful, or you want to me to imagine their demise because you will be happy if they fall, I won't do it. If you wish to break up families, marriages, friendships, out of spite, I won't imagine that for you.

Neville did that same type of rejection. People would ask him to hear certain people being dead and he would reject their request.

So rebounding, rejection, evil, malice, all these things that bring more confusion than good are solved by Love. That is the answer.

This controversy is justified because Neville does seem to contradict himself. My side of this is that the best way to change one's reality is to change SELF and SELF is the collection of persuasions in Imagination. I will always be on the side of using this work lovingly. It is clear that people can imagine all sorts of evils, but don't. There is no need to. Always try to frame your imaginal acts in a loving, free way.

Neville seemed to have evolved his idea of Self through the course of his life, this is why the ideas changed. So even though was a contradiction here, the arrival point was similar, to believe in the reality of loving things in imagination whether for you or the seeming other.